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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT NO.

COUNTRY **USSR**

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SUBJECT **Techniques Used in Determining the Causes of Illnesses or Death in Cases of Suspected Poisoning, Accidental Death and Murder**

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. Despite the low regard put on one's life in the USSR, extreme care is taken to ascertain the cause of death in each individual case. This is particularly true in the case of suspected poisoning, accidental deaths and murder.
2. Even prior to the revolution in 1917, there were many medical institutes in the USSR which specialized in criminal medicine and were the training schools for coroners throughout the USSR. All criminal deaths in the USSR are subject to a complete investigation by the coroner. Each small town has a coroner and in the larger cities of the USSR the coroners usually have several assistants. The coroners of the larger cities have their own complete laboratories where examinations of tissues are conducted. The coroner also is required to perform a complete examination in the case of an accidental death or death where there is no previous knowledge of disease. The coroner usually conducts two types of examinations.. These are:

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- a) Anatomical Examination
- b) Microscopic and Pathological Examination

Where there is suspicion of poisoning, a complete chemical examination is made of all organs. In many instances it is necessary to send the organs to a bacteriological institute for examination. In very small communities of the USSR where there is no coroner, the physician who performs the autopsy is required to send the organs of the individual to the closest bacteriological institute. In the event a coroner cannot determine the cause of death, he is requested to obtain the assistance of a pathologist.

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A certificate as to the cause of death is required in all cases.

- 3. The Communist Party has continued to stress criminal medical training and has established Criminal Medical Institutes in the larger cities of the USSR for the training of coroners. There were criminal medical institutes in existence in Moscow, Leningrad, Minsk, Kharkov and Kiev. Each criminal institute is in charge of a professor of criminal medicine.

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